

REMARKS

Claims 2-7 and 9-15 are pending. Claims 2-7 and 9-15 are allowed. By this Response, claims 1, 8, 16 and 17 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Allowance based on the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokoyama (US 6,014,095) and claims 8 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Fukuzawa (US 5,933,536). By the cancellation of claims 1, 8, 16 and 17 in this Response, the above noted rejections are now moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Applicant notes that there are no further outstanding matters regarding the above-identified application and with the allowance of claims 2-7 and 9-15, the application is now in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests prompt allowance of the application.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Chad J. Billings (Reg. No. 48,917) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.


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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

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Attachment(s)